

March 8, 2012

SB154

I AM IN SUPPORT OF AN ACT CONCERNING STATE EMPLOYEES AND VIOLENCE AND ABUSIVE CONDUCT IN THE WORKPLACE.

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Kim Hinde. I support this Bill, as well as, support additional language added to exploiting psychological and physical vulnerability, and explicit assurance for no retaliation for reporting.

I have worked at my school for the last 11 years. During my time, I have felt firsthand the effects of intimidation, sabotage of work performance, and verbal retaliation. As an employee, I was mandated to report to my supervisor the liabilities of another staff member. This staff member would frequently leave children unsupervised or would not maintain line of sight supervision in time out situations. It turns out, that this staff member's best friend had previously dated my supervisor's direct superior.

Since reporting, I would come into work to find that; my computer printer cable was missing, the master of a 400 page, un-numbered document that I was making 6 copies of was strewn all over my office floor, making it impossible for me to continue my task. I would also find books, reports, and other important materials missing as well. Furthermore, I had come to learn that I was the topic of quite a few happy hours, because of the fact that I had "ratted out" this individual. I became a social pariah amongst their clique and beyond. I was no longer invited to social functions, acquaintances would avoid talking to me, and the passive aggressiveness of others proved that I was no longer valued as I once was.

This staff member, being a very large young man, would try to intimidate me by invading my personal space and would tell me that he would "Get me back". I reported this to my supervisor only for things to get worse. Being targeted in this way lead to many stress related physical symptoms. My blood pressure was higher than it had ever been. I was frequently having muscle spasms, pinched nerves and headaches. I used more sick days and saw more doctors due to these maladies, than I ever had in previous years. Two years later my position was "downsized". I was told that my position was eliminated and that I could come back in another capacity for lesser pay or I could leave. Needing the health insurance I stayed on.

Bullying in any form should not be accepted nor tolerated. At the earliest of age we are taught that we should tell someone if something is not right and they would take care of it. Schoolyard bullies grow up and now the workplace has become their playground.

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We have the obligation and the right to stand up to these bullies and to not let them interfere with our or someone else's quality of life. These economic times are hard enough on us and our families without the stressors of being bullied.

In closing, I also hope that this committee will consider introducing the Healthy Workplace Bill as developed by Law Professor David Yamada and the Workplace Bullying Institute. Workplace bullying affects more than one third of all workers both in public and private sector in the U.S.A.

WE NEED TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM NOW AND WE NEED YOUR HELP TO DO IT.

Thank you for your anticipated support and advocacy for all the working class people that you represent.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kim L. Hinde". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and address.

Kim L. Hinde
23 Talmadge Ave.
East Haven, CT. 06512